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DSP Troopers Plead Guilty to Falsifying Overtime Records

Georgetown – Three former Delaware State Police Troopers assigned to Troops 5 and 7 have pled guilty to charges related to the falsifying of overtime records involving the transports of patients to residential mental health facilities. A Delaware State Police Internal Affairs investigation of the overtime records earlier this year revealed potential criminal violations. That information was reviewed with the Delaware Department of Justice and a criminal investigation was initiated by the DSP criminal investigative unit (CIU).

The criminal investigation reviewed overtime charges over a 4-month period from November 1, 2010 to February 28, 2011. The investigation revealed that three Troopers falsified overtime records in a number of ways. Patient transports are normally conducted by a single Trooper, however, if a patient is aggressive or violent, procedures call for two Troopers to conduct the transport. Investigators found that fraudulent overtime slips filed by the Troopers claimed that two Troopers transported a patient that was allegedly aggressive or violent, when in fact only one Trooper made the transport. Investigators also discovered overtime forms indicating that multiple single patient transports were made on one date, when in fact they discovered that the offending Trooper had two patients in the vehicle during one trip.

Following a review of the evidence developed in the criminal investigation, the Delaware Department of Justice secured arrest warrants for the three Troopers. Each Trooper turned him/herself in and pled guilty in Sussex County Superior Court to Theft (a Misdemeanor) and Official Misconduct (a Misdemeanor) and was immediately sentenced. As a condition of their plea, each Trooper paid restitution for the improper time claimed during the 4-month period reviewed by the criminal investigation, forfeited their police certification, agreed not to be employed as a law enforcement officer in Delaware, and were ordered to pay a fine commensurate with their wrongdoing. All three Troopers retired from Delaware State Police earlier this month.

Employment information, restitution paid, and fine amount for each Trooper follows below:

Master Corporal Valerie Robinson Palacio
Pled guilty on June 24, 2011 before The Honorable T. Henley Graves
Last assignment: Troop 5 Patrol
Date of Hire: 5/20/1988
Date of retirement: 6/6/2011
Restitution paid: \$932.95

Fine ordered: \$1,500.00

Sergeant Michael Whaley

Pled guilty on June 28, 2011 before The Honorable E Scott Bradley

Last assignment: Troop 7 Collision Reconstruction Unit

Date of Hire: 9/16/1988

Date of retirement: 6/6/2011

Restitution paid: \$2,187.11

Fine ordered: \$2,000.00

Sergeant Lance Willey

Pled guilty on June 24, 2011 before The Honorable T. Henley Graves

Last assignment: Troop 5 Patrol

Date of Hire: 9/3/1985

Date of retirement: 6/3/2011

Restitution paid: \$789.12

Fine ordered: \$500.00

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